

REPORT OF AGENT IN UTAH.

REPORT OF UINTAH AND OURAY AGENCY.

UINTAH AND OURAY AGENCY,
Whiterocks, Utah, June 30, 1897.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following as my fourth annual report of this agency, accompanied by statistics and a census of Indians comprising the Uintah and White River Utes residing on the Uintah Reservation, with agency at Whiterocks, Utah, and the Uncompahgre Utes residing on the Uncompahgre Reservation, with agency at Ouray, Utah.

While in ways of civilization these Indians have not advanced as much during the past year as was hoped for at its beginning, very many families on both reservations have manifested much energy in working to establish homesteads with resources from which they hope to gain their own subsistence when left to be a self-supporting people.

Farming.—Owing to the fact that the Department had no funds from which it could supply garden and field seeds, there has not been as much new land brought under cultivation as in the previous year. Last year all who raised crops from seed furnished by the Department returned to the agency granary, to be kept for their use in the next planting, more than had been furnished them; and this class on both reservations have increased their acreage, and a good number of them who never attempted farming before have managed to provide themselves with seed wheat and oats and a little lucerne seed, and, with the assistance of the agency farmers, have made good beginnings. These Indians are fond of potatoes and all vegetables, but those who farm, with few exceptions, are not sufficiently advanced in husbandry to be able properly to care for the keeping of vegetable seed.

The farms that have been established during the past four years have been well fenced on section lines and accepted by Indians as their choice under any provisions that may be made by allotment laws. Some of these farms compare favorably with the best owned by whites in this vicinity. All crops are raised by irrigation, with its attended difficulties, which are hard to overcome, even with experienced white labor. Not an Indian, however, has given up a farm that has been provided for him. A few acres of lucerne appears to be the desirable anchor to hold these Indians to homesteads, and there are but few on either reservation who are not ready to accept of and abide in such conditions.

Stock raising.—Quite a number of Indians have horses and horned cattle. A few on the Uncompahgre Reservation have small flocks of sheep. The horses are usually ponies, although on the Uintah Reservation considerable interest is manifested in breeding for better stock. Several Indians on each reservation have small bunches of horned cattle and derive a little benefit from sale of beeves, but they will have no great profit from cattle raising until the neighboring markets are so guarded by officers of the law that it will not be safe for white thieves to take thereto animals that have been stolen from Indians. Several instances of this offense have been committed during the last and in previous years, and it has been impossible to overcome the hindrances in the way of bringing the offenders before the State courts of justice for punishment.

Drunkennes.—The Indians have improved very much respecting the drink habit, and the police have been efficient in assisting to suppress the liquor traffic by peddlers coming upon the reservations and saloon keepers located just outside the reservation lines. They have given testimony in United States courts resulting in the conviction in two cases, where the judge gave sentences for more than a year's imprisonment. Two others were indicted for the same offense who skipped from the country, and two are now under indictment, who will be brought to trial at the next term of court. The source of most of the liquor traffic that affects this agency is located in dens of gamblers and prostitutes just outside the military reservation of Fort Duchesne, which could not exist without the patronage and encouragement received from the garrison of the Fort, which it is understood goes without restriction.

Schools.—The boarding school of the Uintah Reservation is located close to the agency. The attendance has been good and the parents appear to be growing in appreciation of school advantages furnished their children. The boarding school provided for the Uncompahgres has not been so successful. The plant is pleasantly located and has been beautified with trees and grass. The teachers are interested in their work, and everything possible has been done to make the school attractive. The Uncompahgres from the start viewed the school with prepossessed opinion that it was a place of restraint and confinement, from the effects of which

the children would sicken and die. Their superstition has been increased during the past year, occasioned by three deaths in the school. It is hoped that after the excitement incident to propositions for opening this reservation is over means will be found to induce attendance and make the school prosperous.

Mission work.—The Episcopal missionaries located among the Uncompahgres near the Ouray boarding school have been very successful in their work. They are well liked by the Indians, among whom the two good women are constantly visiting from family to family, instructing the squaws and children in ways of cleanliness and practical Christianity in home conditions. The services held Sundays in the pretty and well-equipped chapel are well attended, and appear to be well appreciated by many of the older Indians. The Sunday school has proven a grand success. The Rev. Mr. Vest and the two ladies associated with him in this work well deserve mention of the results of their faithful service among these Indians.

Habitations.—The larger portion of these Indians live in tepees or rude structures made of logs and earth provided by themselves. On each reservation thirty good, substantial log houses, after pattern filed with the Department, have been constructed by agency employees, all located upon the farms heretofore referred to. These houses are all occupied by progressive Indians, for whom they were provided, and who are fast getting into comfortable ways of living. These Indians make good use of all rough furniture that can be fabricated for them, and exhibit real attachment for their new homes. On each reservation logs have been put in walls for ten more houses, and it is hoped that authority will be granted for expenditure of funds to complete their construction before the next winter.

Allotments.—No allotments in severalty have been made to these Indians. Those that have been provided with homes in the past four years have been located upon allotment allowances of land, fenced upon surveyed section lines, so that with them the matter of allotment in severalty will be easily accomplished. By the act of June 9, 1897, the Secretary of the Interior is directed to locate the Uncompahgres by allotment, and after April 1, 1898, to open for entry under the land laws of the United States all agricultural lands of the Uncompahgre Reservation that have not been allotted to said Indians. This act is the result of four years' discussion in Congress, originating through the schemes of parties seeking possession of the valuable asphaltum deposits found upon the reservation. It is regretted by all interested in the welfare of these Indians that this result was reached without making provisions for locating these Indians upon homesteads, as promised in the treaty made with them in 1880, and it is hoped that the matter will be reconsidered by Congress separated from the interests of the rich asphaltum sharks, whose schemes have brought nothing good to themselves and only fruited in unrest and anguish for these wretchedly poor, long-neglected, legal wards of the Government.

With a proper regard for acting justly observed, the execution of the act referred to within the time prescribed will be found a difficult undertaking. There is only a small amount of agricultural land within the limits of the Uncompahgre Reservation, made up from widely scattered parcels, and not enough to furnish allotment allowances to one-fourth of the Indians to be supplied. It is supposed there will not be much difficulty in negotiating with Indians of the Uintah Reservation for lands upon which to settle the Uncompahgres, but it should not prove surprising if the Uintah Reservation Indians plead that the Government respect their legal right to be consulted in this matter, and not establish a precedent of arbitrarily violating justice and equity in disposing of their legal possessions.

It is true, as asserted in substance before Congress by an advocate for opening the Uncompahgre Reservation, men can be found that would make allotments to the Indians by short-hand process, but it is not believed that Congress intended or that the Secretary of the Interior will permit the wickedness of allotting lands on paper only to be practiced in the execution of the law.

Claims.—From official information received from the Department of Justice it appears that more than six hundred depredation claims, amounting to more than a million dollars, have been filed against the Ute Indians in the United States Court of Claims, and the suits instigated in such manner as to hold either of the confederated bands equally responsible for the alleged depredations. It has also been learned that the number of law officers provided by the Government to defend Indian depredation cases is insufficient for a thorough discharge of this duty. Therefore, acting after the example of other tribes, the Southern Utes of Colorado have united with the Uncompahgres, Uintahs, and White Rivers of Utah, and with the approval of the honorable Secretary of the Interior, have contracted with Mr. Ki Oldham, of Little Rock, Ark., to act as their attorney in defense against these claims. Mr. Oldham, in the interest of these cases, is now in Utah seeking rebutting testimony, and has recently visited these Indians at their agencies. Without doubt nearly if not all of these claims are fraudulent; still it has been necessary

to employ an attorney for defense in order that prosecuting attorneys shall not be able to secure judgment by default.

It is thought that these Indians have just claims against the United States that should be adjusted. It is claimed that there are large bodies of land in the State of Colorado that they relinquished their rights in on condition that it be sold and the proceeds of sales accrue to their benefit; that no credits have been made to them from such sales, and that the larger portion of said lands have been set aside by Executive orders for public parks, for which, if so retained, they should be paid. During Mr. Oldham's recent visit this subject was discussed with these Indians in open council at both agencies, and a contract was made, subject to the approval of the honorable Secretary of the Interior, whereby Mr. Oldham is employed to seek adjustment of these claims, and stipulating that in payment for his services he shall receive a percentage of amounts recovered from the Government, and that if nothing is recovered nothing shall be paid for his services.

In concluding this my last report of duty connected with affairs of the Interior Department, I desire to acknowledge that during the four years of association with its officials I have received uniform kindness, and nothing but kindness, from their hands. My thanks are also due the employees who have served under me for the intelligent, energetic, and faithful support received from them, which is entitled to all credit due for such of success as may be accorded my administration of the agency.

Very respectfully,

JAMES F. RANDLETT,

Lieutenant-Colonel, U. S. A., Acting Indian Agent.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF UINTAH SCHOOL.

SIR: I have the honor to submit my first annual report for the Uintah Boarding School.

The year's school work began September 7, 1896, and ended June 27, 1897, during which time we had two vacations of one week each. The enrollment for the year was 53 boys and 47 girls, making a total of 100.

The health of the school children has been remarkably good. Although there was considerable sickness and a great many deaths among the Indians on the reservation, yet there was not a single case of sickness in school which continued more than a week, and none were seriously ill.

Schoolroom work.—In this department there has been marked improvement. The children have been taught to use English to such an extent that most of them can converse quite intelligently in this language, but nearly all of them use their native language when at home, and will have forgotten much of the English when they return next year. Many of them are quite intelligent and take considerable interest in their studies. Irregularity in attendance has been a great hindrance during the entire year in all departments of school work. In arranging details allowance had to be made for this, and even then whole details would be absent at times.

Industrial work.—The children were regularly detailed to the various departments, so that all had an opportunity for receiving instruction in various domestic pursuits. The girls were taught how to cook, wash, make clothes, and do general housework; even the smallest girls were required to do such work as they could perform in the various departments. Not having any school farm, the boys had but little training in farming and caring for stock. They were detailed to the laundry and kitchen and were required to keep their own building and schoolrooms in proper condition. This with limited instructions in gardening and the supplying of wood for the school was about all the instructions the boys received outside the schoolroom.

School buildings.—The school buildings are mostly in good condition. A new ice house with a meat room at the north end was built last fall, which, when completed, will be a great improvement for keeping meat. We planted about one hundred trees on the school ground, and these with careful tending of the lawn improve the grounds considerably.

Needed improvements.—We are much in need of a store room, where school property can be kept together. At present the goods not in use are stored away in six different buildings, three at the agency and three here at the school. This is a great inconvenience, and is also quite troublesome in keeping account of the school property.

A school farm large enough for common farming should be provided. This is an agricultural country and the boys should be taught how to farm.

A system of waterworks should be provided for the school. There is an abundance of pure mountain water flowing through the school grounds, but at present it must be dipped from the stream and carried in buckets to the different departments. This is very unpleasant to do when the mercury falls to 25° or 30° below zero. Over 18,000 articles of clothing, bedding, towels, etc., were washed in the laundry during the last year, and the supply of water is very inconvenient for this purpose.

In general the school has done fairly well, but backwardness of the parents in sending their children and their determination to take them home for every imaginable excuse has been a great hindrance to the progress of the school. The employees have labored together very faithfully for the promotion of purer morality among the children, and I believe have by their advice and conduct made lasting impressions for good. May the work prosper more rapidly in the future.

Very respectfully,

G. V. GOSHORN, *Superintendent.*

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF OURAY SCHOOL.

OURAY BOARDING SCHOOL, UTAH, *July 1, 1897.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit herewith the annual report of Ouray School for the fiscal year 1897:

In reviewing the work of the past year much progress is apparent in all departments, notwithstanding the fact that conditions have not been favorable to the accomplishment of that end.

Attendance.—The attendance has steadily decreased. The Indians are bitterly opposed to educational influences, persistently refusing to place their children in school, and I fear a display of force will be necessary to increase the enrollment. Visits of the children to their homes have been as brief and infrequent as possible, yet when such visits were made in very few instances were they returned to school by their parents.

Health.—The general health of the pupils has been uniformly good. Two pupils died from inherited tuberculosis, both of whom were in poor physical condition when brought to school. An epidemic of la grippe appeared in February. There were no serious cases and it promptly yielded to good nursing. Strict attention to cleanliness in lavatories and bathrooms and the introduction of individual towels have been the means of almost entirely eliminating cases of sore eyes and scrofula.

Industrial work.—Since the acquirement of Mr. Frank J. Gehringer as industrial teacher much improvement in this department is apparent. The chief end in view has been the training of the boys and not the amount of work accomplished. An effort has been made to inculcate in them respect for work. Every step in the care and cultivation of the garden and farm has been thoroughly explained to them, as well as the various uses of the different tools and implements used in that work. We have endeavored to make farmers as well as crops. Unfortunately our water supply for irrigating purposes has failed us for the past month, resulting in an unfavorable outlook for a second cutting of alfalfa. The first cutting yielded about 30 tons.

Similar advantages have been gained by pursuing the same methods in the girls' department. Systematic instruction has been the chief end of our labors, and the result has been most satisfactory, giving us more intelligent workers instead of mere machines. In the sewing room the progress was marked. The girls were instructed in cutting and fitting, darning and patching.

In addition to plain sewing, the girls have taken much pride in contributing fancy articles, such as rugs, scarfs, tidies, and traycloths to dormitories, play rooms, dining room, etc. No effort has been spared to inculcate in them this spirit of ornamentation, the benefit of which has been clearly demonstrated in their efforts to decorate their homes, which heretofore were entirely devoid of ornamentation.

Literary work.—The schoolroom and industrial department have labored together in full unity. The work in the schoolroom has been good. The teacher has labored earnestly and faithfully with her small classes, and as a result the children have made much satisfactory progress.

We have used every effort to suppress the use of the Ute language among the children, with fair results.

Social evenings have been a prominent feature of our work, and they have undoubtedly been productive of much good.

Needs.—Our greatest needs at present are more scholars and a waterworks system; we need both badly.

I remain, sir, very respectfully,

CHAS. A. WALKER, *Superintendent.*

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF INDIAN SCHOOLS.